

## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

#### **A. Background of the Study**

Nowadays, English has been taught not only to children in elementary schools but also children in kindergarten. Since the government includes English in the Elementary Curriculum especially for grade four, five, and six, many elementary schools provide English subjects to be taught to the children.

According to Depdiknas (2006) establishing English as a local content subject in Elementary school is aimed at supporting the readiness of the elementary school graduates in facing the learning English process at the higher level. Mudjito (2007) says that teaching English in elementary schools is not meant to give as much language knowledge as possible; it is meant to make the children communicate although they only have limited knowledge about the language. The learning process should be focused on oral communication in limited context. The reading and writing activities given should also support the children's speaking skills.

Since children talk about here and now, they like to learn something that can be seen, touched, or heard rather than to learn something unreal. In order to gain the point of the language teaching, the process should be interesting for the children. Class must be held in a fun atmosphere so that the children learn language without any pressure. Moreover, the materials given must be

appropriate for the children. Teachers should choose topics that are related to children's daily life and deliver them with interesting activities. Here, the teaching media plays its role. In order to provide interesting activities, some tools or media that can facilitate the process of learning must be applied. Interesting teaching media is also used by teachers to improve children's motivation in learning the language. Pinter (2006) also says that young children are intrinsically motivated which means they want to learn because they enjoy the process of learning English for its own sake.

Although it has been years since the government included English in elementary schools' curriculum, there are still problems in its process of teaching and learning. First, classroom English had never been used, so children did not get enough language exposure in the class. Second, only some teachers pay attention to the fact that sometimes to educate children teachers need to entertain them. This entertainment can be done through interesting activities, music, stories, and games. Third, teaching English using media is rarely done. Teaching media are known to be very essential especially in the teaching of English to children but are hardly applied in the classroom. Visual media are very crucial since the children like to learn something that can be touched or seen, that is why pictures, hand puppets, and realia are important.

Based on the observation which was done in SD Kanisius Bonoharjo on January 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> 2012, the researcher who became the new English teacher there, found that the students were reluctant to speak. The interview was held

to gather information from the students. Based on the interview, some problems were found. First, they rarely got language exposure in the classroom. The language used in the class was Bahasa Indonesia even Javanese. Second, they did not find the class interesting. They had never been taught using media like pictures, hand puppets, and realia to help the process of teaching and learning. Games, songs, or stories had also never been used in the class. Third, the materials given to children in SD Kanisius Bonoharjo were very limited. The children were only taught English words and Indonesian translation. They were never taught the way to use the words in context. Fourth, the teaching method applied and activities which designed were not clear. Based on the interviews the researcher found that the previous teaching learning process was only consist of translation and doing exercises.

Those become the consideration for the researcher to finally come to an idea that the children need something to help them improving their skills especially speaking. Looking at the problems, flannel boards are seen to be appropriate media to facilitate the learning process.

The use of flannel boards increase the effectiveness and make the students remember more of the details. Comments on the pictures and symbols on the board can be added too. It is a good way to improve interest and make the concept easy to catch. It is effective because it permits two techniques for delivering a message, words of mouth-sound and symbols or pictures-sight. There are many activities that can be done by using this media to promote speaking and to provide interaction among the children. In addition, flannel

boards have been common in other countries but not in Indonesia. It strengthens the idea to choose flannel boards as the media in this case.

## **B. Identification of the Problem**

Based on previous observation, some problems related to the teaching of speaking in SD Kanisius Bonoharjo are found. The problems are the language, materials, media, and the method in teaching English.

Children rarely got language exposure in the classroom. Bahasa Indonesia was used instead of English to deliver the materials and to communicate to the children. That is why most of the children cannot understand instruction given in English. They knew the meaning of some words but cannot apply it in the daily conversation. It makes them reluctant to speak.

Media are very important in teaching children, because children like to learn something real. They like to talk about something that can be touched and seen. Media help them understand things better. It can also entertain them and then build fun atmosphere in the class. The children in SD Kanisius Bonoharjo were never taught using media like pictures, hand puppets, realia, and so on to help the process of teaching and learning. Learning English was not interesting for them.

The teaching materials were very limited. The materials given were only English words and the translation. The children were never taught how to use the English words in their daily life. In other words, they were never taught how to speak English. Some of them were confused when the researcher

applied classroom English. They could not understand, even the very simple instructions.

The teaching method and activities applied were not systematically designed. Based on the interviews the researcher found that the previous teaching learning process only consist of two parts. The first part was the teacher explanation, while the second one was the students' assessments.

### **C. Limitation of the Problem**

Since covering all the problems mentioned above in this study is impossible, this study is focused on the problem of media to improve speaking skills. Flannel boards are chosen to be the media to teach speaking in this study. The research was conducted in SD Kanisius Bonoharjo, Sentolo Kulon Progo. The third grade students in the academic year of 2011/2012 are the participants. The class has seven male students and seven female students. The students were up to nine years old. The research was carried out in the second semester in the academic year of 2011/2012. It was in April-May 2012.

### **D. Formulation of the Problem**

Based on the previous limitation, the problem is formulated as follows:  
How can flannel boards be applied to improve the third grade students' speaking skills at SD Kanisius Bonoharjo?

### **E. Objective of the Study**

Based on the formulation of the problem, the objective of this study is to improve third grade students' speaking skills at SD Kanisius Bonoharjo through flannel board based activities.

### **F. Significance of the Study**

#### **1. Scientific significance**

The research can be a reference on the significance of flannel board based activities and give inspiration to other researchers in conducting other research studies in relation to the English teaching and learning in the elementary school.

#### **2. Practical significance**

##### **a. For the school**

The research can give inputs of flannel board based activities in the English teaching and learning process. Thus, the school principal may have a policy to apply flannel board based activities as one of the teaching and learning method in the school.

##### **b. For the school committee**

This research can show the importance of media in teaching. The school committee may have a policy to provide flannel boards for the children.

##### **c. For the teachers**

This research can provide the specific procedures of how to improve the speaking learning process through flannel board based activities. It also can be

used by English teacher in other schools as alternative solution to familiar problems that may exist in their school.